

Ecclesiastical Relations between the Old Catholics of America and Foreign Churches.

Duvall, Wisconsin: Church of S. Mary the Mother of God, [1892]; transcribed by Richard Mammana 2011.

INTRODUCTION.

In view of the repeated charges made in certain religious and secular journals against the rectitude and consistency of their Archbishop, the undersigned trustees of the Church of S. Mary, the Mother of God, at Duvall, Kewaunee County, Wis., have prevailed upon their chief pastor to permit them to publish such extracts from his letters, received from various quarters of the earth, as they, in their judgment, conceive capable of refuting these charges and showing him to be:

Integer vitae,

Scelerisque purus.

The original letters are in the possession of the Archbishop, and are open to the inspection of all parties interested. The immediate motive for their publication is the resolution of the recent International Old Catholic Congress at Lucerne, which took place from the 12th to the 15th of September last. We do not propose to be the scape-goat for the European Old Catholics. We insist that they shoulder their own responsibilities. From the inception of the Old Catholic work in America, the movement was aided and protected by the Episcopal Church, and the bishops of Fond-du-Lac. All was peace and harmony between the two churches till the Church of Holland and its Archbishop commanded, as a condition of union with Church of Utrecht, that this friendly relation be severed. [1/2] On this condition we were to be received as a daughter church and be supplied with a bishop. But no sooner did we comply with this request than we were left out in the cold, to shift for ourselves as best we might, without even the moral support, the prayers and good works of our Episcopal brethren to comfort us. We were forced to separate from the Anglican Church by the Old Catholics of Europe. And now, in their last international congress, the following conclusion is arrived at. We quote verbatim from Pere Hyacinthe's paper: *Le Catholique Francais*. "All things considered, while we do not regard the Anglican Church as

perfect, yet it is our opinion that it is our duty to aid her reformation in a Catholic direction, above all since a great movement is already operating within her in that sense. *And we consider that it is not good to put an Old Catholic Episcopate side by side with her's and so produce the scandal of a schism.* (Italics ours.) This is in a few words the reciprocal position of the Anglican Church and the Old Catholic Churches.” If this be true, then we have been misled, deceived and betrayed, and it behooves the Old Catholic theologians and prelates of Holland and elsewhere to acknowledge their fault, and to make us reparation as well as the respected Protestant Episcopal Church of America. She has not changed, even if the European Old Catholics have changed. If she is Catholic now, she was Catholic when Archbishop Heykamp called her heretical three years ago. If she has the Apostolic Succession now, she had it then. When Bishop Browne died, he who had acted in lieu of the Old Catholic bishop we lacked, the Old Catholics alone of his diocese were permitted to place a floral crown upon his bier, and they have never ceased to love his memory; to pray for the repose of his soul, and to offer up for him the holy sacrifice of the mass.

[3] Let no man think these letters are published thro’ anger or spite. No. They are made public solely to vindicate the rectitude of our leader and his unswerving fidelity to Old Catholicism. But we do demand, in the name of God and our Lady, that if the European Old Catholics have misled us, they will now have the courage to retract their former words, and put us once more in the right road. We believe what holy church sings on Maundy Thursday: *Ubi caritas et amor ibi Deus est.* We long for charity and fraternal love and this we say in the presence of our God.

PRAISE THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.

ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONS
BETWEEN
THE OLD CATHOLICS OF AMERICA
AND FOREIGN CHURCHES.

In a letter of Pastor Harderwyk, of Delt, Holland, Sept. 11, 1889, occur these words: "You must disentangle yourself from the American Episcopal Church. For that reason you have acted prudently in not having Mr. Gauthier ordained priest by Dr. Grafton, who has, to say the least, a doubtful, if not *invalid*, consecration. . . . It is impossible for you who are a Catholic to remain under the jurisdiction of a bishop (?) who is, seriously speaking, Protestant, and whose apostolic succession is very doubtful. For this reason I counsel you to separate yourself totally from the Episcopal Church. You will say then, that it is absolutely necessary for you to have a truly Catholic bishop and *sine dubio valide necnon legitime consecratus*, and this is very true. . . . Unite yourself with the Catholic Church of Holland. I do not doubt but that our bishops will participate with you as soon as you seriously *ex toto corde* subscribe to her Catholic doctrine. Your churches, or rather the Catholic Church of America, would then be a daughter of the Church of Holland."

In a letter from the same worthy priest of the 4th of June of the same year, occur these words:

"When you write to Herr Wormhout that it is necessary for you to have a bishop '*in perfect communion*' with the American Episcopal Church, I must say that to such a position and proposition I could never subscribe. For (1st) the American Episcopal Church is not Catholic in doctrine—her faith in the holy sacraments (of which the Catholic Church numbers seven) is in nowise that of the primitive Church. The doctrine of the American Episcopal Church, as well as that of the Church of England, touching the holy sacrament of the altar and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is positively Protestant. (2d) The apostolic succession and validity of Episcopal consecration in England and America is extremely doubtful. Perhaps you will say: The Old Catholics of Germany and Switzerland are in communion with the Anglicans. It is true. But I believe the prelates of Germany and Switzerland are led astray by the specious sayings of individuals. . . . Thus they may feel united with certain individual bishops without being at all one with the Anglican Church in general."

A letter from Herr Wormhout, of Delft, about the same date, contains the following:

REV. AND DEAR FATHER:—

“Nothing in your letter so pleased me as your freedom from the milk-and-water theology of Protestantism. But what I don’t comprehend is your desire, even if you had the Old Catholic succession, to be in perfect communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church, for you surely must be aware of the fact that the whole Catholic Church, both East and West, including our own national branch, consider her orders extremely doubtful. Some of her own members, both lay and clerical, participate in this doubt, and have in England banded themselves into a society known as *The [5/6] Order of Corporate Reunion....* As for the doctrine of the Anglican Church, it is undoubtedly heretical, and heresy is heresy, whether found in the Book of Common Prayer or in the decrees of the Vatican.”

That these are only the *private opinions* of individuals of the venerable Church of Holland is disproved by the subjoined extracts from the letters of the Archbishop of Utrecht and Bishop of Deventer, etc.

SCHIEDAM, Oct. 8, 1889.

Rev. Abbe, Dear Friend:—Deus misereatur tui et benedicat tibi, illuminat vultum suum super te et miseratur tui. In the letter with which you honor me, I read with admiration and give thanks to God that you are sufficiently numerous to form a Church *truly Catholic*, free from all *Protestant admixture*. America is a country where the true Catholic faith will grow successfully if you break off your communications with the Protestant Episcopal Church. . . . The affair which occupies your mind at present is a highly important one, dear Abbe; to lay the foundations of a truly Catholic Church in America; a work in which I doubt not God himself has engaged you. However, there are some impediments to overcome, proceeding from persons who merit your esteem and respect, but who unhappily are Protestant Episcopalians and very far from the faith truly Catholic. In order, therefore, that the truly Catholic work may grow, it seems to me that, while ever preserving in your heart esteem and affection for their persons, you ought quietly and prudently to unloose whatever tie may bind you to communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church, which will in no wise serve for the advancement of your genuinely Catholic nascent Church. Defenders of

divine verity as we are, by God's grace, we will aid you. . . . ✚ □ C.
DIEPENDAAL, Bishop of Deventer.

[7]
1889.

UTRECHT, Sept. 19,

To Rev. Rene Vilatte, Priest over the Old Catholics in America.

We receive with great joy your protestation of being, and wishing (*deo adjuvante*) to remain, free from all Protestant influence; for that is the dangerous stumbling-block over which so many have fallen, when seeing the deplorable state in which the Church of Christ is found, they have risen up against the profane novelties introduced and opposed themselves to ultramontaniam. We also note with joy that you do not make common cause with the Anglicans, who, leaving aside the validity of their orders, at bottom are not Catholics, but rather Protestants. For this reason we hope that, however painful may be your situation, you will not rest in ecclesiastical communion with them, nor ever accept from them any *religious* service. It is better, in the wilderness where divine providence has led us, to abandon ourselves wholly to God than to implore the spiritual succor of those who are not united with us in the same faith in *The Truth which is One*."

Further along in the same letter His Grace exhibits the anomalous position of the Church of Utrecht in regard to the Pope. It always struck us as absurd that an heretical bishop of Rome should be the center of orthodox Catholic unity. However, we know from other sources that, stripped of all high-sounding words, the doctrine of the Church of Utrecht is that the Pope of Rome is simply *primus inter pares episcopos*, which, providing he were orthodox (*as he is not*), is exactly the belief of all the ancient Catholic Churches. Says the archbishop: "The Church of Holland recognizes the Roman Church as the only true Church of Jesus Christ, and the Pope of Rome as the center of Catholic unity. Whoever occupies the See of Rome, as long as the supreme tribunal of the Catholic Church has not con[7/8]demned him, the Church of Holland regards as vested with the primacy in the Church. She respects the character with which he is invested, but she does not obey him in that which is contrary to the truth and the spirit of the holy gospel. She, by the grace of God, remains in the Roman Catholic Church, and abhors schism as the greatest crime in the Church. Thus by an unmerited grace, the Church of Holland guards a sound and correct position in the Roman Catholic Church.

I salute you and your brethren with all my heart. Your humble and devoted servant,

+ JOHN HEYKAMP.

Archbishop of Utrecht.

It requires an amount of mental gymnastics of which we are not capable to understand how the Church of Holland, which has defied and disobeyed the popes for 200 years, which rejects the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception, the universal episcopate, and infallibility of the popes, can still maintain “a sound and correct position in the Church of Rome.” If that be true, the German and Swiss Old Catholics, as well as the American Old Catholics, are also “sound and correct” Roman Catholics.

From the same dignitary, after his learning the “*otherwise*” condition of affairs from Bishop Grafton.

UTRECHT, Dec. 21, 1889.

. . . . “You may well conceive, dear Father, that we would in no manner have it understood that for human and material assistance you should remain in harmony and ecclesiastical relationship with a Church whose faith is not Catholic, and which is, moreover, separate from the center of Catholic unity. We had thought of you as though there were certain priests who had chosen your side; we now have learned (O, veracious informant) “that they were Anglican ministers” who quitted you later [8/9] on, regretting the onions and leeks of Egypt, i.e., the creature comforts of the Anglican Church, and not willing to share with you a more modest situation.

Whatever the future may be, my dear Father, do not lose courage; the cause you have the happiness to defend is the cause of God.”

Your very humble and devoted servant,

+ JOHN HEYKAMP, Archbishop of Utrecht.

It is only necessary to state here that the Archbishop was misinformed. No Anglican ministers were ever associated with our Archbishop in his mission work. All were ex-Roman Catholics. One is now serving acceptably in the Roman Communion as missionary in North-West Territory. Another is serving as assistant in a large New York church, one is engaged in a college in Chicago as a professor, and so on. Not one, to our knowledge, has become an Episcopalian for the sake of the loaves and fishes.

UTRECHT, May 13, 1890.

Very Reverend and Dear Sir:—"Some days after Easter I sent you the Holy Oils. . . . The letter from Bishop Grafton greatly astonished us. He says that in case you are consecrated bishop, he can no longer permit you to continue in his diocese the ministry which he has allowed you to fulfil up till now and facilitated in every manner; that he will no longer be able to permit you to preach, to administer the holy sacraments, and to lead the flock confided to your care, although you should do these things in the same manner as you have hitherto done under his eye and with his approbation. This is what we cannot comprehend. You will be obliged, then, according to this, in case you are consecrated bishop, to quit the diocese of Dr. Grafton and search elsewhere a sphere for your activity. *This is not sufficiently clear to us. What is certain is, that you, a Catholic priest cannot be of the number of Anglican [9/10] priests, nor be recognized as such.* However great may be your gratitude for benefits received from them, neither gold nor silver should lead you to act against conscience, to be *amicus usque ad aras.*" . . .

Your very humble servant,

+ JOHN HEYKAMP, Archbishop of Utrecht.

In His Grace's next letter we find the following:

UTRECHT, April 14, 1890.

"I hope the Holy Oils will arrive safely, and that all those who shall be anointed with them may share abundantly in the graces and blessings of the holy sacraments in which they are used.

The important matter of consecrating an Old Catholic bishop for America is ever the subject of correspondence between the bishops. Several difficulties present themselves. This among others. (It is said by Dr. Grafton) when you were ordained priest you promised by oath an obedience to the Bishop of Fond-du-Lac, that in consequence of this oath you were admitted among the priests of that diocese. This oath, it is true, ought not to hinder you from cutting yourself loose from the Anglican Church, from the moment that your conscience as a Catholic priest makes it a duty, but this disengagement from the jurisdiction to which you subjected yourself should be effected in a legal, official and proper manner, thus giving evidence of sincere gratitude for help and past benefits." . . .

Upon this subject of the oath of canonical obedience, which it is pretended our archbishop took to the bishops of Fond-du-Lac, we have only to say that the relations between Pere Vilatte and Bishop

Browne were purely of a *personal* character; that the former was never subject to the canons, discipline and worship of the Episcopal Church, nor sustained any relation to the Standing Committee of the diocese; that his position among the clergy of the diocese [10/11] was granted by Episcopal courtesy. In fact, when in response to the Archbishop of Utrecht's dictum, Pere Vilatte sent in his resignation of the *nominal* position as priest of Fond-du-Lac, Bishop Grafton replied:

"I understand you to mean that you do not intend to be any longer connected with the Episcopal Church, to be a presbyter of my diocese, and under me as your bishop.

In order that you may do this formally, will you please write me and say that 'according to the provisions of Title II, Can. 581, you renounce the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church, to a bishop of which you made your oath of Canonical obedience when you were ordained.'" To this it was replied that Pere Vilatte could not *renounce* the Protestant Episcopal ministry, as he had never been a minister of that Church; neither could he break any oath of canonical obedience, since such an oath was never taken; he never promised to teach the doctrines of the Episcopal Church, never used her prayer book, or administered one of the Seven Sacraments according to the prayer book. Acting on Archbishop Heykamp's advice Father Vilatte sent in his resignation to Bishop Grafton. He could not renounce the Episcopal ministry and be deposed, since he never was an Episcopalian. But he did desire the separation to be effected peaceably, and in "a legal, proper and official manner." Bishop Grafton, however, would not accede to this, but wrote "you must take your letters of transfer and go to Holland or to Bishop Vladimir." And in another letter dated October 30, 1890, still further insists on expatriation as a condition *sine qua non*. "I should not be willing to give these letters dimissory, *except on the condition that you left the country*." Naturally our Archbishop, who is an American citizen, refused to exile himself.

The quotations below are from several divines of the Church of Utrecht.

[12]
16, 1891.

ALMSMEER, May

Dear Sir:—"With affection I have read the correspondence under the 'Church Affairs.' A tragic conclusion, but a necessary consequence of an improper union. Yet it is certainly fortunate that, even tho' in such a manner, the Rev. Pere Vilatte is loosed from every relation with the Episcopal Church. . . . May the Lord of the Church bless you." N. PRINS, Oud Roomsche Katholiek Pastoor.

DORT, May 30, 1890.

Dearlly Beloved Brother:—

Per aspera ad astra.

. . . . Supposing them (the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church) to be originally bishops of the Catholic Church and validly ordained, and that their doctrine remains non-Catholic. They are then in the same condition as the Romans in Germany and Switzerland. Consequently you have the same right and the same duty to work in their dioceses as Bishops Reinkens and Herzog, have in their countries to bear witness to the truth that has been obscured. It would be unjust in Mgrs. Herzog and Reinkens to treat the Roman bishops as enemies, and the Anglican bishops as friends, just because the latter are personal sympathizers. Are the Roman bishops *ipso facto* excommunicated by reason of heresy, and the Anglican bishops are not? It is true there are many 'Catholic-minded' ecclesiastics and laics in the Episcopal Church, but that does not hinder her from being heretical. . . . It seems to me to be necessary for all the Old Catholics to unite most closely, and publicly declare they cannot have any communion with the Anglican Church. In the bishops' conference at Utrecht, Sept. 14, 1889, Bishop Reinkens, among other things, said: 'As long as the Anglican Church keeps the XXXIX Articles we can have no communion with that Church.' Bishop Herzog did not contrad[12/13]ict this statement. This is why I hope our five bishops united at Cologne will end the matter by aiding you in every possible manner, *because you are Catholics like us*. . . . If one might admit the Catholicity, jurisdiction and validity of Anglican orders in regard to such a person as Bishop Browne, or any other individual bishop, no one knows who his successor may be, he is just as likely to be a low churchman. You are right not to unite with Protestant Episcopaliamism; and if you receive no aid from the Old Catholic bishops, you are obliged to address yourself to the Greek bishops, *whose schism does not hinder them from being Catholics*. (Italics ours.) However it seems to me you go too far when you write to Mgr. Vladimir, 'we might be received into your monastery, we prefer to see he people here return to the Roman obedience to becoming Protestant.' If I rightly understand, you would abandon the good work at Dyckesville, and set out for California and work for the Greco-Russian Church. But, my dear Brother, it is that which I should deplore. Our Archbishop has told me that Bishop Grafton should withdraw everything that had been given you, should you become an Old Catholic bishop without recognizing his jurisdiction. *This does not prove his love for the Old Catholic Church!* It is extremely disagreeable for you, but it must not prevent your continuing

the Old Catholic work. . . . Keep up good relations with Bishop Vladimir, and that may become the source of the reunion of the Greek and Catholic Churches. . . . At Cologne I will speak in your favor, and against the too intimate relations of Bishop Herzog with the Anglican church. *Aspera via ducat te et tuos ad vitam aeternam.*”

Your devoted

T. VAN SANTEN.

Many readers will doubtlessly recall the most interesting correspondence between this “*Divine of Utrecht*” and [13/14] the Right Rev. A.C. Coxe, which appeared in the *Churchman* in the beginning of the summer of 1890. Very soon after this the letter containing these words reached America.

DORT, July 25, 1890.

Dear Brother. . . . You must wait till after the congress at Cologne. I rejoice at your patience, for I certainly believe that then our bishops of Holland will convince Mgr. Herzog; and since he has still need of them, as well as Bishop Reinkens, you will have to be free and entirely independent of the Anglican Church. This morning I had a letter from his lordship, the Bishop of Haarlem. He requested me to write to you in his name, and in the archbishop’s name, that the bishops in Holland would await till the conference of Cologne before taking any decision in your affair, not in order to be fettered by Dr. Herzog or any other person, but to come to a clearer position, and more impartial judgment. Such are the words of his lordship of Haarlem. He further adds: ‘In my opinion it is very necessary to arrive at *one* sentiment, and that we follow *one* rule of conduct in regard to the Church of England and the Episcopal Church of America.’ You see, dear friend, that our bishops in Holland want to act in accord with Bishops Reinkens and Herzog, but I can assure you that they have a very great sympathy for you and for your work in America, especially because you are willing to be free from the Church of England. And should Mgr. Herzog not consent with them for your consecration, I believe they would rather unite with you than with Bishop Herzog. . . . I agree with Bishop Vladimir that the Anglican Church is not Catholic in its doctrine, although several members of that Church, both lay and ecclesiastic, are Catholics in their belief. Thus one may sympathize with these Catholic members, but may not unite with the [14/15] Anglican *Church*, which tolerates every sort of opinion possible. . . . I congratulate you that you have not allowed yourself to be led to sacrifice the Catholic faith for silver or gold, and that your people are thoroughly in harmony with you. Bishop Herzog does not believe that the XXXIX Articles contain

the unadulterated Catholic faith, but he believes these Articles to be only a state law, which does not hinder Anglicans from being true Catholics, because the Church of England tolerates Catholics as well as Calvinists—but therein precisely lies the fault of that Church. And Bishop Cleveland Coxe will never convince me that the Anglican doctrine is Catholic. *That Church has no doctrine whatever; it is a veritable Babel.* . . . Pere Hyacinthe has addressed himself anew to our Church of Holland; and I hope he will withdraw his too intimate sympathies for the Anglicans, to become truly Gallican, that is to say, truly Catholic. It seems to me also that your Church, when it has a bishop, should remain entirely free, but in communion with us, as are the provisory Churches in Germany and Switzerland. I do not believe it to be necessary for you to be under the jurisdiction of the Church of Holland, or any other Church.

Your very devoted brother and friend,

T. VAN SANTEN.

COLOGNE, Sept. 15, 1890.

Dear Friend:—You will soon hear the resolutions of the conference of Bishops, and if you do not ask too much, you will be made very happy, I believe. I am not allowed to write you more at present.

Hoping we shall ever remain in friendship,

I am your devoted,

T. VAN SANTEN.

[16] Dr. Van Thiel, the learned President of the Old Catholic Seminary of Amersfoort, on reception of our Profession of Faith, wrote as follows:

“I am happy to assure you that the reading of your ‘Sketch’ has quite satisfied me. It has rejoiced me so much the more in that, while altogether respecting your apostolic zeal, I believed there was some subject for fear lest your Church ran the risk of departing from true Catholic doctrine. For firstly, I knew your ministry was connected, though ever so slightly, with an Anglican Diocese: then, in an account of the Old Catholic work, I read among other things ‘although the *creed* or *doctrine* be the same, our Old Catholic ritual is entirely different from the Episcopal liturgy’ nevertheless, I *know* that the doctrine of the Episcopal Church differs in essential points (*points capitaux*) from that of the Catholic Church. But now, happily, the Profession of Faith you have published leaves no doubt whatever, that your Missionary Church

is altogether conformed to the ancient faith of the Catholic Church, and that she is determined to cling closely thereto. Your Profession appears to me to be very clear, and assuredly, as to its doctrine, we should have no difficulty in subscribing to it However I pray that the Lord may bless the work of your mission, and that nothing will prevent our Church from procuring for you very soon the spiritual aid you need. Accept the affectionate and respectful sentiments of yours devotedly,

J. J. VAN THIEL.

AMERSFOORT, May 28, 1890.

We now give Pere Hyacinthe's opinion as to the necessity of an Old Catholic Hierarchy in America. The reader is requested to compare this with his utterances quoted in the preface. O Consistency, thou art a Jewel!

[17] A letter of Pere Hyacinthe Loyson to Father Vilatte.

NEUILLY, 29 Boulevard Inerkmann.

Rev. and Dear Sir.—The Pere Hyacinthe charges me to write you, making his excuses for not replying to your letter before this; but illness and incessant occupation have prevented him. He now begs to say to you that under the serious circumstances in which you are placed, and with the very grave matter you propose to him, he strongly advises you to come over to Paris and confer with him *viva voce*. A mistake would be fatal to you and to the important work you propose to undertake. There is much to be said which it is impossible to say by letter. Then your ordination, which should certainly be by the rite Latin, can be easily accomplished by our Old Catholic Bishop—l'éveque de Berne. This is a *sine qua non*, if you hope for any success in a true Catholic reform. If you act with wisdom and charity, as becomes a priest of the Holy Church of Christ, you can do a great work. But if you make a false step at the beginning you will surely fail, and not only injure your own future vocation, but do great harm to the cause of true Catholicism and religious reform.

Yours very sincerely in CHRIST,

E.H.L. for PERE HYACINTHE.

EMS, 6 Sept. 1890.

Dear Bro. in the Catholic Faith:—

. I do not know Father Vilatte personally, but only by correspondence. But I esteem him, and I offer up prayers for his work. I think that he ought to be consecrated a missionary bishop, and I believe it is the duty of the Metropolitan Church of Utrecht to take that mission and the other missions of the French language under his care and direction. We have had recourse to [17/18] Anglican bishops simply because, up to the present time, the bishops of Holland have refused their spiritual protection. I pray God to inspire them with different sentiments. I remain your grateful and devoted brother in the Faith of Jesus Christ and his Holy Church.

HYACINTHE LOYSON, Priest.

In the *Churchman*, of New York, July 26, 1890, occurs this item, which goes to show that the idea of an Old Catholic hierarchy in America, working side by side with the Episcopal, excited neither surprise nor alarm. "P. Vilatte's Mission in Wisconsin has been recently described by the Oud-Katholieck of Rotterdam, which states that he contemplates entering into direct connection with Utrecht, and that Bishop Grafton, of Fond-du-Lac, is favorable to such a transference. It even speaks of the consecration of a special bishop for the work as possible." And Bishop Grafton in a letter dated May 23, 1890, says: "Whatever action is taken by Utrecht I shall accept. As yet I have had no reply to my letter, save that you saw from Bishop Herzog. God may intend to bring about a better understanding between the two Churches. This is what I hope. Oftentimes individuals suffer that the Church may grow With my loving regards in XT.

+ C.C., Fond-du-Lac."

Speaking in the same letter of an individual who contemplated leaving the American Old Catholics to enter a Roman Monastery, Bishop Grafton admits the existence of *two separate churches*, and therefore that the Old Catholic Church in America is not a French Mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He writes: "How are you going to prevent its being given out that he has left you for the Romans? I think it should be made clear that he had applied to *you*, and you had not accepted him. [18/19] He has never been received by *us*." We quote this sentence also from Bishop Grafton's letter to Archbishop Heykamp in regard to Pere Vilatte's consecration. "Allow me, Your Grace, to take this opportunity of expressing the hope and the earnest prayer, that this matter may tend, not to the hardening of differences between our communions, but may lead to a more intelligent understanding of our respective positions, and the eventual union of our churches." The Old Catholic basis is—the Seven

Ecumenical Councils (the Seventh being the touch-stone of Orthodoxy,) the Seven Sacraments of the Gospel, and the universally received canons of the first millennium. When our Profession of Faith was published in 1890, it was submitted to the judgment of the Episcopal Church, the Old Catholic Churches, and the Holy Eastern Churches. We have thought it advisable to give in parallel columns the judgments of Bishop Grafton and his Eminence of Alaska.

BISHOP GRAFTON.	VLADIMIR EPISCOP.
“I have received your printed pamphlet entitled the “Belief of the Old Catholics.” With much of it I can agree,—perhaps with certain interpretations put upon it—with all. But I think there is in it a departure from the original ground upon which the Catholic Christian Church as represented by Bishop Herzog stood, and which weakens its theological position.”	“I received your Confession of Faith, and read it with great interest and pleasure. Believe me that your Christian teaching is fully in accordance with the sense of ancient true Catholicity of the Christian Church. I would not hesitate to sign your pamphlet myself as perfectly Orthodox.”

The consensus of the Old Catholic divines as to our Orthodoxy has been established in the first letters of this series. We now turn to the Holy Eastern Church, and her advice is voiced as follows:

“SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 28, 1890.

We are all warriors of the heavenly king; but it is time [19/20] to contend, not so much against papacy and the abominable protestant heresies, as against agnosticism and cold religious unbelief. I think we should be in union with you, and the English Episcopal Church (if the latter would drop into oblivion the “*filioque*” added to the Nicene Creed and the XXXIX Articles). The best soldiers of the Church are Monks. Monasticism should be multiplied as much as possible.

+ Your sincere servant in Christ, Vladimir Episcop of Alaska and Aleutian Islands.”

From the same, May 8, 1890.

“I understand that your relations to Anglican Church are unpleasant, and to tell you the truth it is not canonical, because we do not recognize the Protestant hierarchy of the Anglican Church as an

institution of Christ. The Orthodox Church hesitates to admit that the Anglican bishops are successors of the Apostles. To speak truly, you are now under the jurisdiction of a prominent layman who calls himself a bishop. The opinion of the Archbishop of Utrecht about the heterodoxy of the Anglican Church is true. *I am sorry the European Old Catholic bishops disagree in this case.* Your endeavor to have a bishop for the Old Catholics in America is wise; but it would be improper for a bishop of the Church to be a suffragan of a protestant preacher.”

Extract from letter dated 27 Feb., 1891.

“To the Rev. Superior of the Old Catholic and Orthodox Mission, from Vladimir, Bishop of Alaska and Aleutian Islands.

Dear and beloved Father Joseph:—I received a letter from Mr. Grafton, addressed in my care (probably with intent to insult me,) with the information that the so-called bishop tries to remove you from your parish at [20/21] Dyckesville, and I send you his unjust letter. You can with your parishioners protest against this removal on the ground that you are Orthodox Old Catholics and cannot be subject to a protestant jurisdiction, because the canons of the Church prohibit it. Preach and fight against your enemies incessantly. We shall sustain you as a true brother in Christ, beloved and esteemed by all true Christians. If you desire I will send you a Pastoral Letter to the Old Catholics defending your Christian piety, and in another paper protest against unlawful encroachments in spiritual affairs of Old Catholics by Mr. Grafton.”

The following is from Bishop Vladimir’s Pastoral Letter to the American Old Catholics.

“God bless you to defend by all the power of your community, the worthy and pious Superior of your parish, Very Rev. Father Joseph Rene Vilatte, against persecution and encroachments of Anglican Protestants, who cannot be your true brothers in Christ on account of heresies and lack of true apostolic succession: they have no power from Christ to guide you to everlasting happiness in the kingdom of God.”

Finally, in order that our Superior be protected from any pretended inhibition, suspension or deposition, the following “Certificate” was published and sent to the Bishop of Fond-du-Lac and others.

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By the grace of God and authority bestowed on me by the Apostolic succession, I, Vladimir, Bishop of the Orthodox Catholic Church, announce to all clergymen of the different Christian

denominations, that Rev. J. Rene Vilatte, Superior of the Old Catholic parish at Dyckesville, is now a true Old Catholic Orthodox Christian, under the protection of our Church, and no bishop or priest of any [21/22] denomination has the right to interdict him or suspend him from his religious duties. Any action contrary to this declaration is null and void.

+ Vladimir, Bishop of the Greco-Russian Orthodox Church.

Episcopal Courtesy! Bishop Herzog's opinion

BERNE, March 24, 1891.

Rev. R. Vilatte, Priest:

Rev Sir:—You will easily understand that the 3, Oct., 1890, I did not address myself solely to your person for information upon those respective questions. I received the last letter December 30, 1890. The authentic extracts from the documents received (above all from *your* letters), were sent to Bishop Reinkens; the latter sent them to the Archbishop of Utrecht. I kept the *originals* to return them with our official reply. I now inform you that I send by this same post, *to the address of Bishop Grafton*, the following pieces:

I. A letter from Bishop Grafton (to you). Genl. Convention of Bishops, October 11, 1889.

2. Articles of Incorporation.

3. Notarial Act of Constant Martin, (21st October, 1890.)

Bishop Grafton will judge for himself whether he is under obligations to forward these papers to you.

I do not see how those papers can prove you are not as you say, "*a protestant episcopalian*."

In the numerous letters you have addressed to me, you prove only that you were under the jurisdiction of the *venerable Catholic bishop Grafton*. The only further remark I have to make is this, that I want to have nothing more to do with you.

ED. HERZOG."

[23] From this courteous? letter it follows contrary to the opinion of all the preceeding divines, that our Archbishop is a *Protestant Episcopalian*, and Bishop Grafton is a *venerable Catholic bishop*! This is somewhat of a paradox! Again, our Archbishop has been considered dishonest; but Bishop Herzog sends Pere Vilatte's private letters and documents to Bishop Grafton, and the latter *keeps* them, but they both

are *honorable and honest men!!* It may not be irrelevant here to give the words of Bishop Coxe to one of the members of our board of trustees:

BUFFALO, June 6, 1891.

“Thank you, my dear Christian friend, for your kind and polite note. I praise you in showing fidelity to your pastor, Mons. Vilatte,” (this was after Bishop Grafton's suspension) “and I honor and love the Old Catholics. It would not be polite for me to interfere with a brother bishop's affairs, and the *Churchman* never publishes articles of this kind from *other* papers. I am glad to read the article and to see the “other side.” Tho, I wish Christians and Catholics might never forget self-respect in dealing with one another Between the Russo-Greek, the Church of Utrecht, and the Old Catholics, and ourselves (Anglican Catholics), there are no differences which would have been accepted as justifying separations I have studied the great Fathers for fifty years, and am very sure that *ignorance* is at the bottom of all discord among those who hold the Creed of Nicea and the Catholic Councils. The Seventh Council (so-called) was not Catholic, any more than that of Frankfort. Your faithful friend in Christ.

A. CLEVELAND COXE, Bishop”

We confess, that with all our respect for the scholarship and person of Bishop Coxe, we do not see our way clear to [23/24] give up the Seventh General Council, which is received alike by the Roman, Old Catholic, and all the Holy Orthodox Eastern Churches. But we are glad to know that he approves of our fidelity to our spiritual superior. We are further persuaded that Bishop Coxe is not opposed to the establishment of an Old Catholic hierarchy in this or any other country, where the Latin Church exists. Hear his noble words to Dr. Van Santen, of Utrecht. “But we believe a better day is at hand, *in which a restored catholicity shall be given to Latin Churches*. And we trust the Church of Holland, after long suffering and forbearance, is now called of God for the holy mission for which He has been preparing her. As for ourselves, (Anglicans), we prefer that she should not be entangled by our common adversaries in any of the evils and calumnies they have raised against us.” (*Vide Churchman*, Summer of 1890).

Last spring the Greco-Russian Bishop, Nicholas, visited our Mission. Immediately after, communications were opened with the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod of Russia, the zealous L. Pobedonostzeff, the Arch-priest Janicheff, Confessor to their Imperial Majesties, and the illustrious General Kireeff. All proved their interest by replying, and the unanimous opinion of these three exalted personages, whose reputation for Orthodoxy and whose interest in Old

Catholicism is well known, may be summed up in this sentence, taken from General Kireeff's letter to Brother Augustine, dated:

“PAVLOVSK, (Petersburg, Russia,) Aug. 13, '92.

My Dear and Rev. Sir:—

. I think you are quite *right* in avoiding any theological,—any Church intercommunion with the Anglicans, but *wrong* in avoiding the relations with the (Euro-[24/25]pean) Old Catholics. Of course one must be on friendly terms with everybody, the more so with civilized and good natured people (and the English *are* civilized), but there is a great difference between being on friendly terms and being in church intercommunion. In the English Church we find several parties, the *high*, the *broad*, and the *low* Church. Now the high church party is very near to us. As a general rule they do not care about the XXXIX Articles, and follow the tenets of the Common Prayer Book. But unhappily they are united with the Calvinistic parties of the established Church of England, and these *are too much Calvinistic*, therefore as long as the establishment will last, there will be no possibility whatever of being in intercommunion *in sacris* with one part of the established Church of England without being as well in intercommunion with the two others. I do not suppose the establishment will last more than one generation more, but now, unhappily, it stands like a stumbling block in the way of intercommunion. I believe that the case is quite different with the Old Catholics. I follow with the greatest care their movement; and I now find no *dogmatical* differences between the *actual* Old Catholics and the undivided Church of the first Millennium.

Yours most truly,

A. A. KIREEFF.”

In singular agreement with the foregoing are the words of the learned Prof. Michaud, President of the Old Catholic University of Berne. It will doubtless interest the reader to compare the Professor's words with his own Bishops letter to Pere Vilatte.

“I say that the Anglican Church considered in its documents is not Catholic. I say that to affirm the contrary, is to be ignorant either of Catholicism or Anglicanism. [25/26] (1.) I declare that the 39 Articles are a jumble, in which are found papist scholasticism, protestantism, catholicism, and perhaps other things besides, but which will never be acceptable for a true Catholic. (2.) That in the Catechism, which forms part of the Prayer Book, and to which one must conform to be confirmed, the seven sacraments are not recognized, but two only; the other five are very badly handled by the 25th Article of Religion: (3.)

That among these five Holy Orders is found, and is therefore, a purely human institution; and that, being thus considered, it cannot transmit the sacramental and apostolic succession of the priesthood. Its branch theory of the unity of the Church, according to which the true Catholic Church is composed of the Roman, the Anglican and Oriental Church, is false and anti-catholic, condemned alike by common sense and Catholic tradition. This suffices, I think to demonstrate that the Anglican Church, (I do not say the *High-Church party*) is not Catholic. As long as the *high* church shall not be distinct and separate from the two others, as long as it forms part of a church of which the fractions called low and broad are parts as rightly as it, then the title Catholic can never be legitimately bestowed upon that church. This it must be well understood does not hinder me from being full of respect and sympathy for the individuals within her pale who are better than their church. But as greatly as those individuals are respected and dear to me, so much that church as such, with its confusion and pride, is antipathetic by its illogicalness," *La Fraternelle*, 1883, p. 150-151.

Our work is now ended. If, as we hope, we have our Archbishop's consistency, and fidelity to the Old Catholic platform, his obedience to the fountain Head and Chief of European Old Catholicism—if we have shown [26/27] that our separation from amical and fraternal relations with the Episcopal Church in America was due to the Church of Holland and its Archbishop—we have accomplished the task we set before us at the start. We have nothing but love and gratitude toward the Anglican Church, and we see no reason why in the future, we should not go hand in hand with her to meet our common foes, and, while quite distinct, yet dwelling together in peace, unity and love, so realizing the words of the royal prophet: *Ecce quam bonum et jucundum est fratres habitare in unum.*

(Signed)

GUILLAUME BARRETTE.

EDOUARD DEBECKER.

AUGUSTIN MARCHAND.